

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

May 10, 2013

The Honorable John F. Kerry
Secretary of State
2201 C Street NW
Washington, DC 20520

Dear Mr. Secretary:

We are writing to express our concern about the harassment and abuse inflicted upon Mr. Chen Guangcheng and his family by local officials in Shandong Province in China. Most urgent is the dire medical condition of Chen Kegui, the imprisoned nephew of Chen Guangcheng, who is reportedly suffering from acute appendicitis. His family is fearful that absent proper medical attention (which has been denied by Chinese authorities to date) his life is at risk. In 2012, Kegui was denied due process and sentenced to over three years in prison for only defending himself and his family against armed intruders.

Further, it has come to our attention that on May 9th, Chen's elder brother, Chen Guangfu, was violently beaten in what seems like an escalating effort to intimidate and harm Chen Guangcheng's family.

It is our understanding that you and State Department officials have made the medical condition of Chen Kegui a priority in your discussions with Chinese government officials. We appreciate those efforts but request that you consider the following options moving forward:

- Continue to work with the Chinese government at the highest levels to ensure that Chen Kegui is immediately hospitalized and given a medical examination by a licensed physician. Officials from the U.S. Embassy should request to visit Kegui at Linyi Prison to underscore the importance the U.S. places on his well-being. Once the immediate physical danger is averted, we ask that the State Department pursue medical parole for Chen Kegui.
- Meet with Chen Guangcheng and his wife, Yuan Weijing. Such a meeting would not only bolster their own spirits in the midst of a difficult time but it will send a clear and unequivocal message to the Chinese government that this situation is of the utmost importance and that a swift and satisfactory resolution is in their strategic interest.
- Urge the Chinese government, in the strongest possible terms, to honor its commitments to protect the civil rights of Chen's family, fully investigate the illegal activities of local authorities, and prosecute those responsible for the illegal and criminal acts against Mr. Chen and his family.
- Absent any progress on China's commitments, utilize the presidential proclamation, issued on August 4, 2011, which made it U.S. policy that individuals engaged in serious human rights abuses and humanitarian law violations shall be denied entry into the United States. This proclamation gives the administration cause to convey to the Chinese government that

the local and provincial officials engaged in the abuse of Chen and his family will, should they apply, be denied visas, in keeping with U.S. policy regarding human rights abusers. Regardless of whether any of these individuals intend to travel to the U.S., such a message to the Chinese government would be of great symbolic import.

In regards to the visa ban, human rights organizations and the press have compiled credible evidence to substantiate the claims of Chen Guangcheng regarding the specific individuals, through command responsibility and/or direct involvement, who have committed serious human rights violations in their persecution of Chen and his family, including illegal house arrest, forced disappearance, trumped up charges resulting in eventual prison time, beatings and the denial of medical treatment. We can help provide additional details of abuse and documentation as needed if that would prove useful.

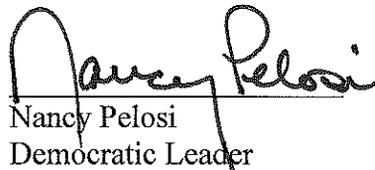
Chen Guangcheng and his family have suffered greatly at the hands of Chinese officials in Shandong Province. Their story is not unfamiliar but it is somewhat unique, in that it has garnered international attention, in part through Chen's heroic escape from house arrest, and shone a bright light on the consistent human rights abuses endured by the Chinese people. It has further revealed, in stark terms, a troubling trend of Chinese officials abusing, harassing, and intimidating the families of human rights activists in order to try to pressure these brave men and women into abandoning their important work.

At the appropriate time, we would like to request a briefing by the State Department regarding the actions being taken regarding this situation.

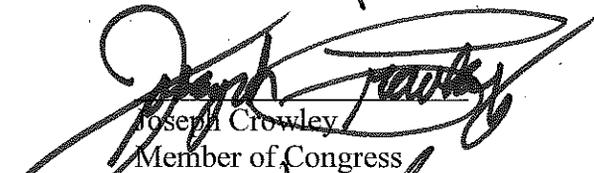
Thank you for your attention to our recommendations and the plight of Chen Guangcheng and his family.

Sincerely,

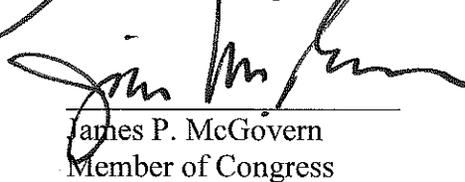

John A. Boehner
Speaker of the House

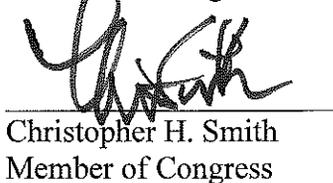

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